**Election of 1824 Document Based Question**

**DBQ and Persuasive Writing**

**Due Date: Monday, April 30**

**What is This Paper?**

This paper is a **DBQ (a document based question**) that asks you to use multiple sources to answer a question that does not have a right or wrong answer. The quality of your answer is found in the evidence and explanation you use to **persuade** the reader. In a history DBQ, similar to what is found on Advanced Placement exams, you will be asked to answer a question and assessed on your ability to use evidence to make a persuasive argument to me (or a reader) that connects your understanding of the documents.

We will be studying and learning how to answer a DBQ, as well as how to use elements of persuasive writing to convey our ideas.

**The Question:**

Read and analyze the sources in this packet to answer the following question: **Was there a “Corrupt Bargain” between John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay to steal the presidential election of 1824?**

Did John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay carry out a conspiracy to unfairly steal the election for their benefit? Or did Quincy Adams and Clay operate within the rules as laid out by the Constitution?

No halfway answers will be accepted.

**What will I be graded on?**

Mr. Staten will be grading your response as though he was reading a response on an Advanced Placement Exam. I will be looking for your use of a thesis statement, supporting evidence from the documents (at least 3) and outside knowledge. In a history DBQ, bringing in outside knowledge that you can cite goes a long way to impressing AP readers.

**Source One: The Election of 1824 (Courtesy *The American Pageant* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy)**

The woods were full of presidential timber in 1824. Four candidates towered above the others; Andrew Jackson of Tennessee, the tall, silver-haired “Old Hero” of the Battle of New Orleans; John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, highly intelligent and perhaps the most experienced candidate to ever run for office; Henry Clay of Kentucky, the gallant “Harry of the West”; William H. Crawford, a giant of a man, able but sickly. The results of the campaign were interesting and confusing. Jackson, the war hero, had the strongest appeal and easily won in the west. He won almost as many votes as his next two rivals combined, but he failed to win the majority in the Electoral College. In this situation, according to the Twelfth Amendment, the House of Representatives would choose between the top three candidates. Clay, who finished fourth, was eliminated; but as Speaker of the House, he would preside over the chamber that would pick the new president. Clay was in a position to throw the election to the candidate of his choice.

Clay hated Jackson. He resented Jackson for being a military war hawk who seemed to delight in killing as many people as possible. Jackson, in turn, hated Clay for denouncing Jackson’s conquest of Florida back in 1818. With Crawford out of the way because of a stroke, the only candidate left was Quincy Adams. Clay and Quincy Adams had much in common politically; they agreed on many issues, including the American System. Shortly before the final vote, Clay met privately with Quincy Adams and potentially assured him of his support.

In March, 1825, the House of Representatives met to make their fateful decision. Thanks to behind-the-scenes influence from Clay, Quincy Adams was elected president on the first ballot. A few days later, Quincy Adams named Clay his Secretary of State. Being Secretary of State was a huge prize as Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, and now Quincy Adams had all served as Secretary of State and then gone on to be elected president in their own right. By dangling the cabinet post as a possible bribe, John Quincy Adams had apparently defeated the first choice of the people, Andrew Jackson.

Jackson’s supporters were furious and raised a roar of protest against “The Corrupt Bargain.” Jackson blasted Clay as the “Judas of the West.” While no positive evidence has formally emerged to prove that Quincy Adams and Clay made a deal, the appearance was so scandalous that no amount of denials from either man was convincing.

**Source Two: The Results of the Election of 1824 (Courtesy *The American Pageant* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy)**

Results of the Presidential Election of 1824

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Candidate | Electoral Vote | Popular Vote | Percentage of Popular Vote |
| Jackson | 99 | 153,544 | 42.16% |
| Quincy Adams | 84 | 108,740 | 31.89% |
| Crawford | 41 | 46,618 | 12.95% |
| Clay | 37 | 47,136 | 12.99% |

131 Electoral Votes Needed for Majority

Results of the Presidential Contingent Election of 1825 in the House of Representatives

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Candidate | Total Votes | Vote Percentage | States Won | Percent of  States Won |
| Quincy Adams | 87 | 41% | 13 | 54% |
| Jackson | 71 | 33% | 7 | 29% |
| Crawford | 54 | 25% | 4 | 17% |

50% of State Delegations Needed to Win

**Source Three: The Journal of John Quincy Adams (Courtesy *The American Spirit* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy)**

*December 17, 1824*: I had conversation with R. P. Letcher, representative from Kentucky, home of Henry Clay. Mr. Letcher wished to know what my feelings toward Clay were. I told Mr. Letcher that I had no feelings of hostility toward Mr. Clay at all. He was sure Clay felt the same about me. Letcher’s point was to make clear that if some of Mr. Clay’s friends could know he would have a prominent position in my administration that might encourage some of them to vote for me. Mr. Letcher did not speak for Mr. Clay but urged me to keep our conversations confidential and private.

*January 1, 1825*: After a public dinner, Mr. Clay told me in a whisper that he wished to have some confidential conversations with me about public affairs and he would be glad to do so at my earliest convenience. I urged him to come speak with me whenever it suited him.

*January 9, 1825*: Mr. Clay came shortly after six and was greatly concerned. The time was coming when the House of Representatives would soon make its choice for president. Clay was very upset that a representative of William Crawford had appealed to him in so obvious a manner that it caused him a great deal of public embarrassment. Clay even noted that some of my friends had come to him, urging him to think of his personal benefit. He had thought it best to remain silent on the matter, but now wished me to satisfy him about matters of public importance. In the question to come before the House concerning General Jackson, Mr. Crawford, and myself, he had no hesitation in announcing that his preference would be for me.

**Source Four: “*Henry Clay Protests His Innocence*”from the Journal of Henry Clay (Courtesy *The American Spirit* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy)**

*January 29, 1825*: The supporters of Jackson have turned on me! They do not understand what it means to be honest. They cannot understand that I have thought seriously about this matter; and that my conscience is telling me that it is dangerous, absolutely dangerous, at this early stage of the Republic, to elevate to the presidency a military chieftain merely because he won one battle at New Orleans! Mr. Adams, you know well, I should never have selected, if at liberty to draw from the entire mass of citizens a president. But there is no danger if he becomes president. Not so with Jackson, his competitor. I do not believe the killing of two thousand, five hundred Englishmen at New Orleans qualifies anyone for the various and difficult challenges of the chief executive.

*February 4, 1825*: I want no office in the future Cabinet. I’ve rejected the Ministry and Ambassadorship to Russia, and I refused to serve as the Secretary of War under President Madison. I refused to serve as Ambassador to Great Britain, and in any other ministry under President Monroe. I don’t know who Mr. Adams will chose to be in his Cabinet if he is elected. I don’t know if I will be offered a place in it. If there is an offer, I will decide, if one is made, according to my sense of duty, patriotism, and service to my country. If an office should be offered to me in the new administration, and I could be convinced I would to accept it, I shall not be deterred from accepting it.

**Source Five: Speech of Martin Van Buren to the new Democratic Party, 1828 (Courtesy *The American Pageant* by Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy)**

“Shall the people rule? The will of the voters was thwarted in 1825 by the backstairs bargain of Adams and Clay. The only way to right this wrong is to seat General Jackson! The general will bring about reform by sweeping out the dishonest Adams gang. Jackson and reform! Take up your hickory brooms, tokens of the coming clean sweep! Huzzah for victory! Huzzah for General Jackson!”

**Source Six: Letter from General Andrew Jackson to Henry Lee (Courtesy The United States Library of Congress)**

Mr. Adams is the constitutional president and I would be the last person in the Commonwealth to oppose him on any grounds other than principle. How he reached the office is a matter for the next election. As to his character, it is obvious that I hold him to be an able and honest man. When the rumors of intrigue between him and Mr. Clay reached me, I could not believe that Mr. Adams would participate in such scandalous behavior. When the election was over, I praised Mr. Adams for his virtue. But when these rumors became fact and Mr. Clay became Secretary of State, the evidence was incontrovertible and I could doubt no longer. Mr. Clay called Mr. Adams one of the most dangerous men in the Union and the last man who should ever be president.

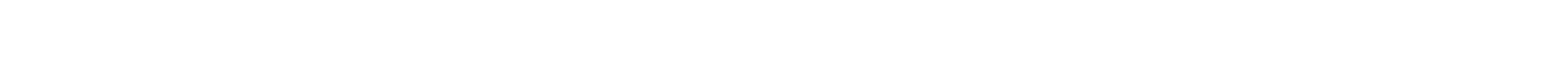
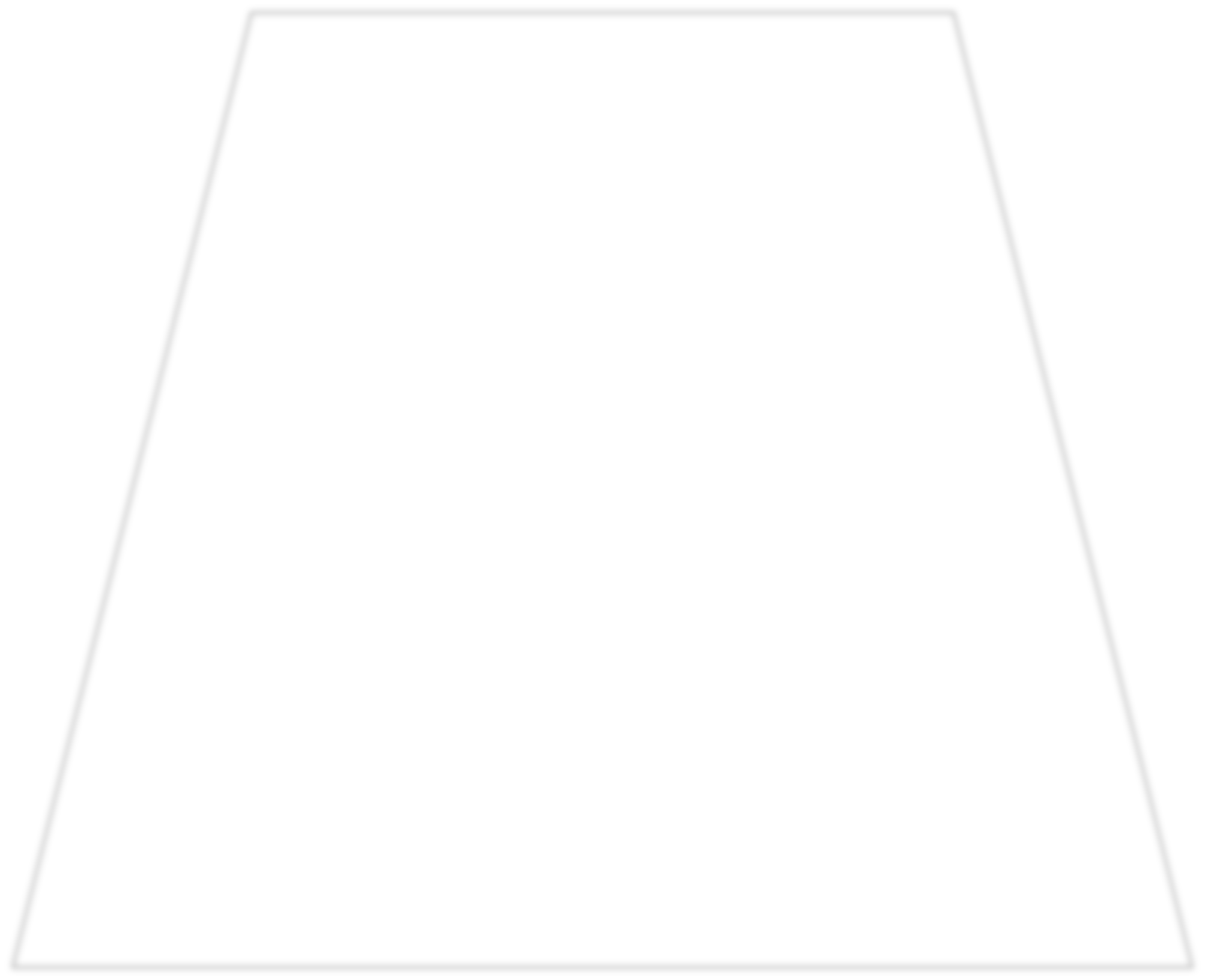
**Source Seven: The Electoral College and the Twelfth Amendment (Courtesy of Citizen Genius)**

Video can be found at: [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zr--6bZcHG4**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zr--6bZcHG4)

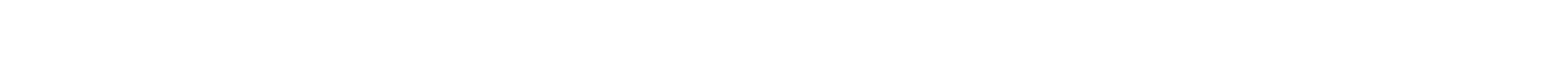
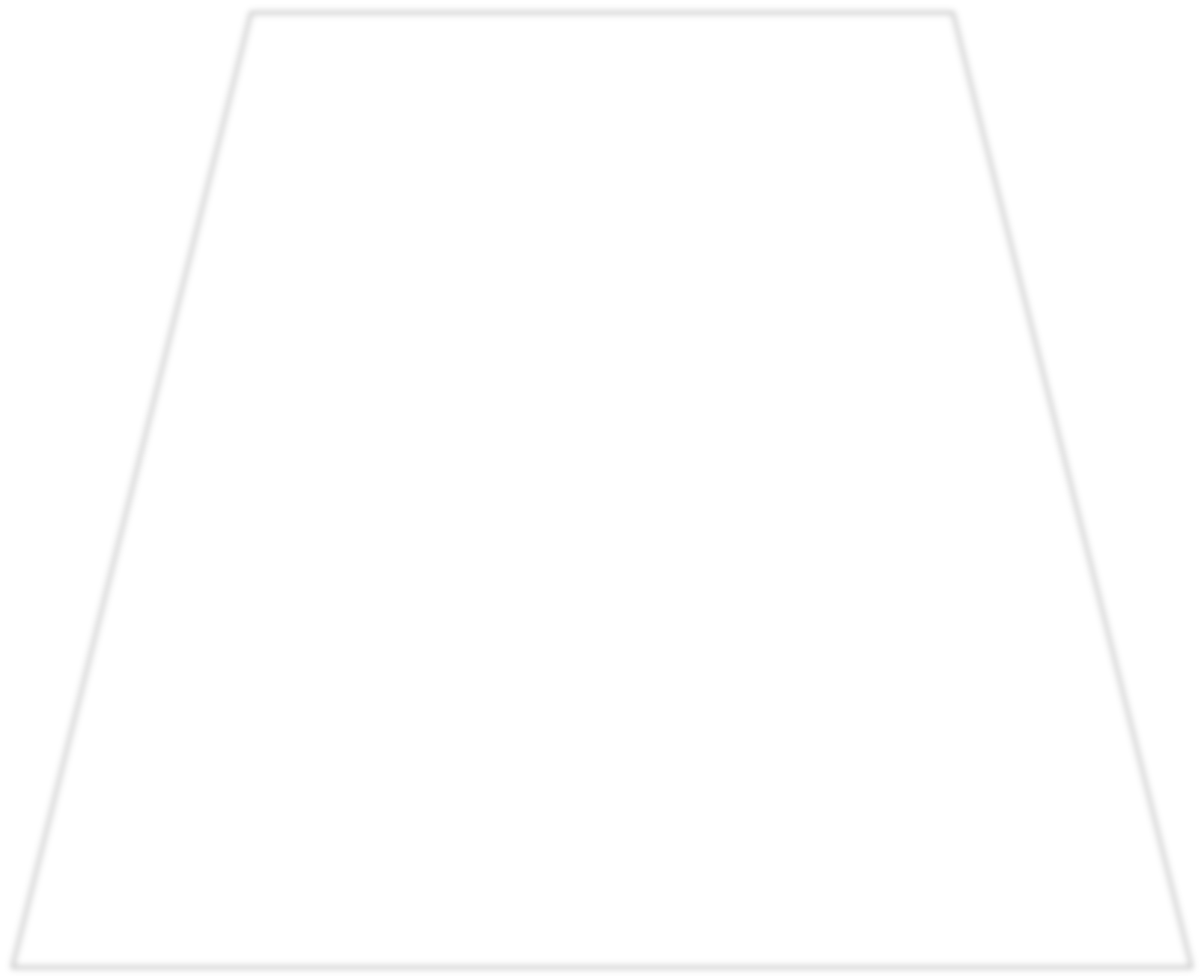
Mr. Staten will also post a link on the Wiki.

**Thesis Statement: Your assertion. Was there a “Corrupt Bargain” between John Quincy Adams and Henry Clay to steal the presidential election of 1824? Or did they operate within the Constitutional rules?**

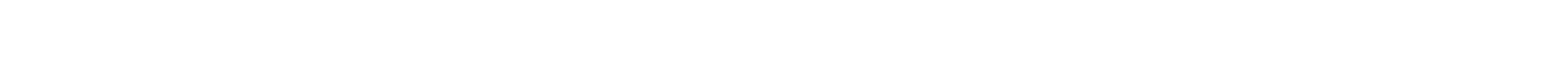
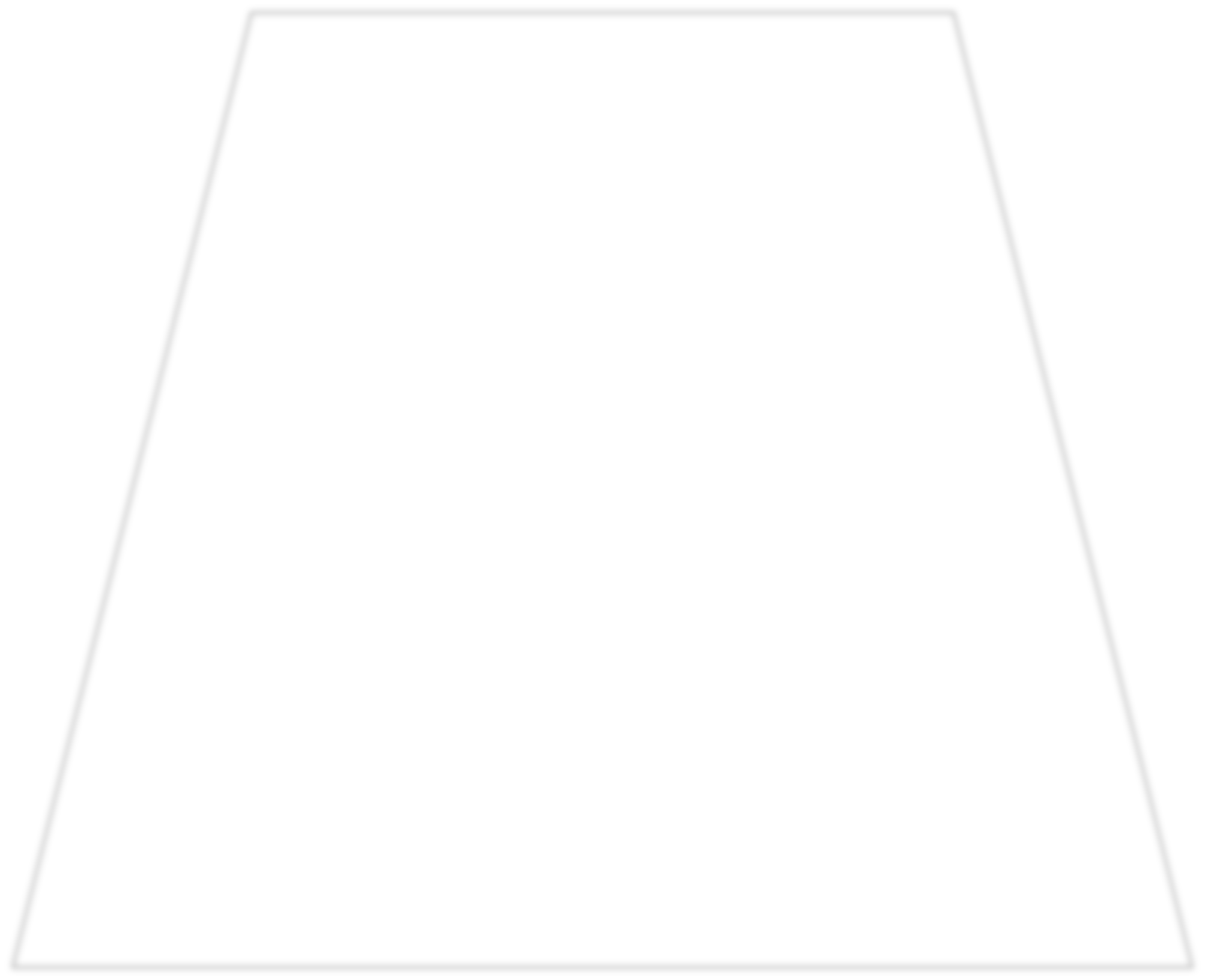
**Thesis:**



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Bucket 3:

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